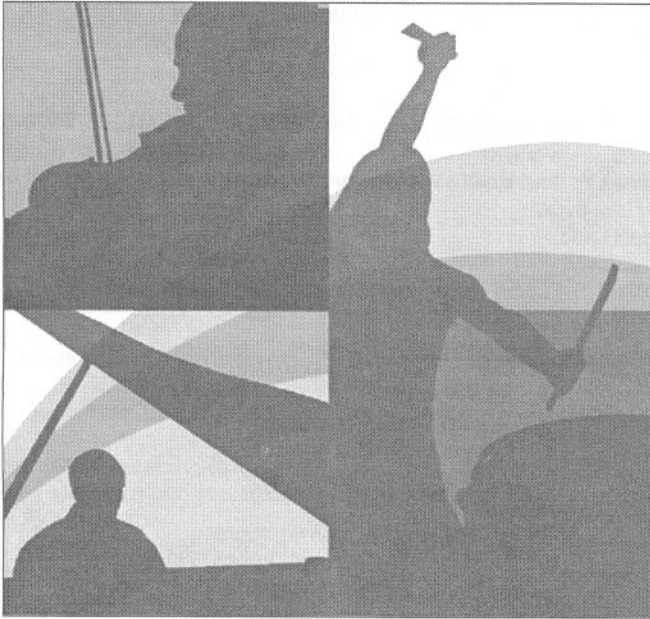


CD 2008--33/34

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO FACULTY OF MUSIC



2007-2008 SEASON



WHERE GREAT MINDS MEET GREAT MUSIC

Friday, March 7, 2008
7:30 pm. Walter Hall

Faculty Artist Series
Presents

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO

Music written in 1907 and 1908

PROGRAM

Introduction by John Beckwith, Dean of the Faculty of Music, 1970-77

From Love in a Life (text by Elizabeth Barrett Browning)

Gena Branscombe

How do I love thee?
The Widest Land
My Own Belovèd

Lorna Macdonald, soprano; John Kruspe, piano

Sonata, op.1

Alban Berg

John Kruspe, piano

Pièce en forme de habanera

Maurice Ravel

Jamie Kruspe, violin; John Kruspe, piano

Pastorale (1923 arrangement)

Igor Stravinsky

Lorna MacDonald, soprano
Clare Scholtz, oboe; Richard Dorsey, English horn;
Stephen Pierre, clarinet; Kathleen McLean, bassoon

Sonata No. 3 ("from old notebooks")

Serge Prokofiev

John Kruspe, piano

The Unanswered Question

Charles Ives

Michael Barth, trumpet; Alberta Brown, Timothy Crouch, Jiajia Li,
Katherine Watson, flutes; Gary Kulesha, conductor

INTERMISSION

Passacaglia, Op.1

Anton Webern

Violin: Maia Broido, Mark Johnston (concertmaster), Jamie Kruspe, Iain McKay,
Kenin McKay, Colin Repas, Natasha Rollings, Emma Vachon-Tweney,
Monica Westerholm; **Viola:** Mohsin Bhujwalla, Jane Levitt, Katharine Rapoport;
Cello: Samuel Bisson, Brenton Chan, Chris Hwang, Miso Mok; **Bass:** Deirdre Bryant,
Callum Jennings, Alex Kotyk; **Flute:** Timothy Crouch, Jiajia Li; **Piccolo:** Katherine Watson
Oboe: Candice Barnes, Richard Dorsey; **English Horn:** Clare Scholtz; **Clarinet:** Alix Haywood,
Stephen Pierre; **Bass clarinet:** Julia Stroud; **Bassoon:** Kathleen McLean, Lance McMillan;
Contrabassoon: Ondrej Golias; **Horn:** Marina Krickler, Anna Millan, Emily Rapson,
Curtis Vanderhayden; **Trumpet:** Michael Barth, Jenna Howells, Marcel Sekine;
Trombone: Stuart Bremner, Nate Fanning, Anniemieke Vanderkraay; **Tuba:** Ian Feenstra;
Harp: Caroline Cole; **Percussion:** Michelle Colton, Will Snodgrass; **Timpani:** Michelle Huw
Gary Kulesha, conductor

Sonata, Op. 107**Max Reger**

Moderato

Vivace-Adagio-Vivace

Adagio

Allegretto con grazia

Katharine Rapoport, viola; John Kruspe, piano

Sonata No. 5**Alexander Scriabin**

John Kruspe, piano

A portion of the ticket revenues from the Faculty Artist Series are used
to fund student awards at the Faculty of Music

This concert is performed on the Edith McConica Steinway piano.

Program Notes

"A Hundred Years Ago" is a program featuring music written in 1907 and 1908, a time in history which witnessed the dawn of a new era for the European socio-political sphere, and consequently the rise of new attitudes in the western arts that redefined music as a product of the new century.

As a modern industrial civilization rich in growth and development, Europe dominated the world stage, its resulting hubris and appetite for raw materials accompanied by an increasingly unbridled imperialism. This global race for wealth and power fuelled patriotic passions and a posturing militarism, leading inevitably to international hostilities that rent the continent. That political powderkeg was paralleled on the home front by an escalation of societal conflicts bequeathed by 19th century industrialization. Such extreme tensions produced a climate favourable to the rise of a modern consciousness, which placed emotion, not rationalism, as the central drive to human actions. This embrace of the nonrational would lead to the extremely volatile environment that foreshadowed the First World War – the highest expression of emotion unleashed in the years to come.

Some artists communicated this intensity in a heightened subjectivity; others reacted against such excess, rejecting the over-refinement of Romanticism and favouring instead the simplicity of primitivism, which symbolically exhibited a sense of freedom – an escape from socio-political bondage. Those who were in the vanguard of these attempts to give expression to such overwhelming

disorientation inevitably cornered the headlines of history, but revolutionaries are always in the minority: multitudes of others continued to hold to traditional designs, while still others strove to find a middle ground between the old and the new in that turbulent era.

Tonight's program reflects music as a tribute to a distant enlightened past, an evolution from the preceding era of 19th-century romanticism, and an expression of the beginnings of 20th century disarray.

We begin with *Love in a Life*, a six-song cycle written by Canadian-American composer Gena Branscombe, who was born in Picton, Ontario, but studied in Chicago in her late teens, and later with Florenz Ziegfeld and Engelbert Humperdink; she had a long, prolific and successful career, serving in executive positions in several influential organizations, including a term as president of the Society of American Women Composers.

Set to six selected poems from Elizabeth Barrett's *Sonnets from the Portuguese* (1850), the cycle relates the complexity of human emotions immersed in the depths of romantic love, and traces their evolution – from sorrow and fear of separation through death, to passion, and ultimately, to joy and salvation through love, the journey mirroring Barrett's courtship with fellow poet and soulmate Robert Browning. Tonight's performance enters at the height of Branscombe's cycle with the third song, which features the most famous poem of the dark-haired Elizabeth

(Robert's pet name for his wife was his 'Portuguese') and opens with one of the best-known lines in the English language: "How do I love thee?"; we will then continue through to the heights of love in the fourth and final songs. Exhibiting moments of contemplative recitative-like passages, and expressive melodic lines supported by rich turn-of-the-century harmonies, Branscombe's cycle stands not only as an interesting companion piece to Schumann's setting of *Frauenliebe und Leben*, but as it was composed not long before the granting of women's suffrage in Canada, it is also an ironic comment on the feminist foment of that time.

No.3 How Do I Love Thee?

How do I love thee? Let me count the ways.
 I love thee to the depth and breadth and
 height
 My soul can reach, when feeling out of sight
 For the ends of Being and ideal Grace.
 I love thee to the level of everyday's
 Most quiet need, by sun and candle-light.
 I love thee freely, as men strive for Right;
 I love thee with the passion put to use
 In my old griefs, and with my childhood's
 faith.
 I love thee with a love I seemed to lose
 With my lost saints,—I love thee with the
 breath,
 Smiles, tears, of all my life!—and, if God
 choose,
 I shall but love thee better after death.

No.4 The Widest Land

The widest land
 Doom takes to part us, leaves thy heart in
 mine
 With pulses that beat double. What I do
 And what I dream include thee, as the wine
 Must taste of its own grapes. And when I sue
 God for myself, He hears that name of thine,
 And sees within my eyes the tears of two.

No. 6 My Own Beloved

My dear Belovèd, who hast lifted me
 From this drear flat of earth where I was
 thrown,
 And, in betwixt the languid ringlets, blown
 A life-breath, till the forehead hopefully
 Shines out again, as all the angels see,
 Before thy saving kiss! My own, my own,
 Who camest to me when the world was gone,

And I who looked for only God, found thee!
 I find thee; I am safe, and strong, and glad.
 As one who stands in dewless asphodel
 Looks backward on the tedious time he had
 In the upper life,—so I, with bosom-swell,
 Make witness, here, between the good and
 bad,
 That Love, as strong as Death, retrieves as
 well.

Alban Berg's *Sonata Op. 1* is a pivotal piece in the composer's output. Written for 'graduation' as was Webern's *Passacaglia*, this dramatic one-movement sonata-allegro work is a testament to Berg's compositional development and musical maturity acquired while studying with Schönberg. Although tonally rooted in B minor, it is highly chromatic, and Berg is able to communicate deeply expressive sentiments by means of his complex contrapuntal writing and intense emotional climaxes, propelled by multipurpose motifs that are exploited both harmonically and melodically to their fullest extent. Originally he had intended to write it in a traditional three-movement structure, but by the completion of the first movement, it became apparent to both teacher and student that additional movements would seem redundant: Schönberg stated simply that he had already said all that he needed to say.

Ravel's *Pièce en forme de Habanera* has been arranged for almost every instrument imaginable, although he originally wrote it as a vocalise. Epitomizing both the composer's taste for the exotic and his closeness to his mother's Basque heritage, it is a beautiful evocation of Spanish sensuality — listen to the habanera's typically languid melody, driving ostinato, and haunting rhythmic grouping of three and two notes to a beat. The modal melody creates a sense of "otherness" in the Western tradition, but the tonality is communicated very clearly through extended dominant and tonic pedals. Holding a prominent place in Ravel's *oeuvre* and in his heart, the *habanera* was, as de Falla noted, "the song most in fashion among those his mother heard in gatherings in Madrid, in bygone days."

Pastorale, written by Stravinsky in his early years as a young pupil of Rimsky-Korsakov, is also a vocalise for soprano and piano accompaniment. Dedicated to Rimsky-Korsakov's daughter, Nadezhda, its charm and freshness made it a fitting wedding gift. A lovely, coquettish melody wafts above a

static musette harmony like a cool breeze, and Stravinsky complements his transparency in texture with clarity in form and tonality that is rooted by an enduring tonic pedal. Its simplicity and lightness further lend to an elegance that recalls the pastoral – an evocation of freedom, nature, and a primitivism that characterizes his reaction against the overly-ornate Romantic style. Tonight's performance features his own 1923 arrangement, accompanied by oboe, English horn, clarinet and bassoon.

Prokofiev's *Piano Sonata No.3, Op.28 in A minor* (1907) reflects the compositional prowess of the young composer, who was then sixteen and studying at the St. Petersburg Conservatory. Revised in 1917 and now subtitled 'from old notebooks', the piece conveys a youthful exuberance that is evocative of Prokofiev's boyhood infatuation with classmate Elizabeth Eshe, whose beauty and strange last name inspired the theme of this one-movement work. As his autobiography reveals, he wrote her name in French as 'Eche' and noticed that each letter, E-C-H-E, represented a note, with the 'h' as 'B natural'. But far from being 'subordinate', as Prokofiev misleadingly describes it, it is this 'Eche' theme that plays at the heart of his piece. In its most complete form it appears as the lyrical second theme of the Exposition, flirtatious imitations woven into its design and culminating in a 'kiss' between the performer's hands. A glance back to the sonata's opening and the origin of the work's germinal, clashing F-E semitone motive is immediately clear: it is the 'C-H' semitone which is embedded in the cipher. Prokofiev makes much of the intelligence implicit in the motive's semitone juxtaposition, and in the frequently violent moments of the Sonata's development section and final pages, programmatic inferences are difficult to ignore, as happy reminiscences of a distant, idyllic past are crushed by the stark reality of the political and social catastrophes of 1917.

Ives' *The Unanswered Question*, subtitled *A Contemplation of a Serious Matter*, is the first of his Two Contemplations for small orchestra, and precedes *Central Park in the Dark*. Written during his most innovative compositional period, he effectively combines tonal and atonal elements in a superimposition of three distinct orchestral layers of time, harmony, and space. The result is a musical montage – a 'cosmic landscape' that reflects the complexities of life and sets

the listener forth in philosophical pursuit of the fundamental meaning of existence. This mystical experience is marked by a subtle strings backdrop, representing a testament to the discretion of the Druids, who are knowing of the unattainable truth, but are pledged to eternal secrecy. Their 'Infinite Silence' is disrupted by the trumpet, which interjects in brief atonal phrases to ask the 'Perennial Question of Existence'. The question is intoned repeatedly, becoming more insistent, as it comes to resemble a dissonant plea. In return, a group of four flutes, 'The Fighting Answerers', attempt to give an answer, but find their efforts futile and leave the trumpet in its solitude to ask the question once more... and the silence endures as we wallow in the darkness of the unknown...

The *Passacaglia* for orchestra, like the Berg *Sonata*, is Webern's 'official' op.1, and marks the end of his four-year period of formal compositional training with Schönberg. Based on a single eight-bar theme (D-C#-Bb-Ab-F-E-A-D), which serves as the ground bass for his set of twenty-four variations, it projects a true sense of musical economy and organic unity. These aspects are reflective of Schönberg's teachings, and are conveyed by the theme and countersubjects' motivic construction, and simple, yet multi-functional harmonization. Tonally, the piece points to Webern's camaraderie within the Second Viennese School: though forward-looking in its harmonic syntax, it shares the same D minor tonality of signature works, such as Berg's *Der Wein* and Schönberg's *Verklärte Nacht*. Older models and practices also inform its overall structure and design: its D minor-major-minor tripartite organization and its *passacaglia* genre, dating back to the Baroque, recall that of the Bach *Chaconne*; its possible program, in which the D major section evokes the angelic presence of his beloved mother and the redemption of fullness promised by memory, revisits the ages-old emotional implications of major vs. minor.

Max Reger's *Sonata in B-flat Major, Op. 107* for viola (or clarinet) and piano showcases the elaborate writing of this often-neglected composer. The work's complex texture reveals Reger's virtuosity as an organist, and its thick, chromatic sonorities are particularly Brahmsian. Yet it is the sonata's originality and its sensitive and intimate character which remain in one's memory. In response to its premiere performance at the Darmstadt

chamber music festival, the *Darmstädter Tageblatt* effectively expressed the ethereal quality of this cyclic work: "The dreamy melancholy tone permeating the entire work provides the main motif for the first movement, but it recurs again and again in the following three movements in the midst of heightened emotions and accelerated rhythms... The basic character of this, let us say, pastoral sonata is a dreamy, unworldly, inward-looking mood, a deeply-felt tonal idyll of beautiful sound".

Scriabin's ten piano sonatas lie at the heart of his compositional output. Personally narcissistic and visionary, even messianic, by the time of his *Fifth Sonata*, he was also a true musical revolutionary, pushing the bounds

of tonality and form. This unique creation is marked by frequent tempo changes, dynamic contrasts, opposing themes, and a harmonic palette owing much to the whole-tone scale, and demands the execution of diverse virtuosic figurations throughout. Completed in merely three days, it is this work in which he manifests a fierce creative energy – the intensity of which is expressed in the quotation at its head: "I call you to life, you hidden aspirations! You, buried in the dark depths of the creative spirit, you timorous embryos of life, I bring you audacity!"

Notes by Justine Wong, fourth year History and Theory major, Faculty of Music.

Biographies

John Beckwith, composer, writer, pianist, teacher, and administrator, studied piano in Toronto with Alberto Guerrero and composition in Paris with Nadia Boulanger. He was associated with the Faculty of Music for 38 years, including a term as dean, 1970-77. He was founding director of the Institute for Canadian Music, 1985-90. His more than 130 compositions include 4 operas, orchestral, choral, and chamber works, songs, and solo pieces. He has been active in such Canadian musical organizations as the Canadian League of Composers, the Encyclopedia of Music in Canada, the Canadian University Music Society, the Société québécoise de recherche en musique, and the Canadian Musical Heritage Society, and has produced critical and research writings about Canadian music past and present. Beckwith holds five honorary doctorates and is a member of the Order of Canada.

Richard Dorsey was principal oboe with the Toronto Symphony until retiring in 2005. He was principal oboist with the US Air Force Symphony and Band, the Canadian Chamber Ensemble and Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony. He has also been a regular guest principal oboist with the Boston Symphony. Richard teaches at the University of Toronto and the Glenn Gould School and has taught at the University of Oklahoma, Wilfrid Laurier University, and the Courtenay Music Centre (BC).

Pianist **John Kruspe** studied with Douglas Bodle and Anton Kuerti. A University of Toronto

Faculty of Music graduate, John is a member of the teaching staff in the Theory and Composition division.

Gary Kulesha – pianist, organist, conductor, choir director, teacher, CBC producer, broadcaster, musical journalist and composer – undertook most of his musical training in Canada, with additional study of composition in England with John McCabe and in New York with John Corigliano. His works have been performed across North America as well as in Europe and Australia, including by such prestigious artists and ensembles as Maureen Forrester, James Campbell, the Cleveland Orchestra, the Edmonton Symphony and the National Arts Centre Orchestra.

Soprano **Lorna MacDonald** enjoys a career of distinction as a singer, voice teacher, and professor at the University of Toronto. In 2001 she received the honor of being named to the *Lois Marshall Chair in Voice Studies*. In 1997 she received Ontario's prestigious OCUFA Award for "teaching excellence and outstanding contributions to university teaching". Her students are found at major summer programs, international competitions and on opera and concert stages from Victoria to St. John's, and from Santa Fe to Venice.

Kathleen McLean is Associate Principal Bassoon of the Toronto Symphony. A graduate of the Curtis Institute, she studied with Sol Schoenbach. She was principal bassoon of the Canadian Opera Company and a member of the Victoria Symphony. She has participated

in the Vancouver Chamber Music, Evian International, and the Ottawa Chamber Music Festivals. Kathleen has performed as a member of the World Orchestra for Peace. She teaches at the University of Toronto and the Royal Conservatory of Music.

Stephen Pierre has been principal clarinet with the Hamilton Philharmonic and Victoria Symphony. He is an inaugural member of "chamberWORKS!", and has performed as soloist with the Victoria Symphony and the Hamilton Philharmonic. Stephen attended the University of Toronto and studied with Robert Marcellus, Stan McCartney and Avrahm Galper. He teaches at the University of Toronto and McMaster University, and has recorded for CBC, Live Entertainment, and the Solitudes labels.

Clare Scholtz studied with Rhadames Angelucci at the University of Minnesota, Richard Killmer at Aspen, and received her Master of Music from the University of Toronto. She was principal oboe of the Saskatoon Symphony, and taught at the University of Saskatchewan. Clare has performed with the National Ballet Orchestra, Toronto Symphony, Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony,

Esprit Orchestra, Soundstreams, Arraymusic, and Continuum. Clare teaches private oboe students, music education courses, and coordinates woodwind chamber music at the University of Toronto.

Katharine Rapoport has premiered solo and chamber works by many living Canadian composers and is a member of Esprit Orchestra. Other recent performances include the Mozart String Quintet in C, K.515, with the Alcan Quartet at Chamber Music at Port Milford Festival, and a programme celebrating Schostakovich's centenary. In addition to teaching her violin and viola students and coaching chamber music at the Faculty of Music, Katharine conducts the RCM Chamber Orchestra and adjudicates at festivals across Canada. She has just completed writing *Violin For Dummies*.

Jamie Kruspe is in his first year of the Bachelor of Music program in Performance, and is a student of Jacques Israelievitch. He was a member of the Toronto Symphony Youth Orchestra, and was awarded a scholarship to study at the Chautauqua School of Music with Mr. Israelievitch in the summer of 2007.



Next on the Faculty Artist Series

Friday, April 4, 2008

PERCUSSION AND PIANO

Internationally acclaimed percussion ensemble NEXUS teams up with pianists Midori Koga and Lydia Wong in Bartok's *Sonata for Two Pianos and Percussion*, and other works.

7:30 pm. Walter Hall. \$22 (\$14 senior/student)

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